REMARKS

The Office Action dated June 12, 2008 has been carefully considered. Claim 4 has been amended. Claim 4 is in this application.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over previously cited U.S. Patent No. 3,892,058 to Komatsu et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,139,898 to Meyer et al.

The invention defined by the present claim teaches the steps of washing the long grain rice with purified water, coating the washed long grain rice and of sterilization which is conducted by repeating 4 to 10 times the sterilization at a temperature of 130°C~150° C and for 4 to 8 seconds each time.

In contrast, Komatsu et al. teach sterilization is conducted at 130°C~160° C for 0.5 minutes to 15 minutes for a single time in continuous sterilization (col. 15, lines 34-30). Meyer et al. teach that sterilization is conducted at 80°C~100° C for 1 minute to 80 minutes (col. 3, lines 1-17).

Applicants submit that the hardiness and stickiness of the rice may be changed depending on the conditions for sterilization. If the sterilization is conducted at high temperature, for a long time, at a single instance, the sterilization may induce destruction of starch cell membrane generating a sticky cooked rice. Applicants have unexpectedly found that the sterilization method of the present invention including repeated sterilization generates cooked rice with an improved degree of stickiness.

A Declaration under 35 U.S.C. § 1.132 by inventor Changyong Lee is submitted herewith which compares cooked rice prepared under a set of experimental sterilization conditions. Item 2 of the Declaration describes that the claimed process sterilization process step was compared to the experimental conditions sterilization process steps of Komatsu et al. and Meyer et al. Item 3 of the Declaration and Table 1 describe that the hardness and stickiness of the cooked rice is dependent on the sterilization process. Item 4 of the Declaration describes that the claimed sterilization step of the present invention provides a rice having low stickiness, low destruction of the starch and provides fluffy cooked rice. Item 5 shows that the repeated sterilization conditions of the present invention provide unexpected increase of textural

properties of the rice. Applicants submit that it is not expected that repeated sterilization would have improved properties over a single sterilization step.

Furthermore, the method of the present invention includes the steps of washing the long grain rice with purified water and coating the long grain rice with emulsified oil and then removing water from the long grain rice. Applicants submit that Komatsu et al. do not disclose or suggest the steps of the method of the present invention of coating the long grain rice with emulsified oil and then removing water from the long grain. In contrast, Meyer et al. disclose the step of treating the rice with acidified water (pH 4.0-4.5), and then coating the rice with an oil. Meyer et al. do not teach or suggest washing the long grain with purified water. Applicants submit that even though Meyer et al. teach that the rice is coated with emulsified oil, the state of the rice when the rice is coated is very different compared to the state of the rice of the present invention. If the rice is treated with acidified water before oil coating as Meyer et al. discloses, the stickiness of the rice is increased because the pasting (degradation) of the rice is increased in acidic pH. Rather, in the present invention, the use of purified water does not have the undesired effect. In contrast, in the present invention, the cooked rice not treated with acidified water. Thus, the rice of the present invention is structurally different than the rice of Meyer et al. Further, the steps of the present invention of coating the long grain with emulsified oil and removing water ensures that the long grain is not pasted and thus it becomes fluffy with a lower degree of stickiness. In contrast, Applicants submit that from the method taught by Meyer et al. it is impossible to obtain rice with the fluffiness of the present invention, as shown by the Declaration of Changyong Lee.

Accordingly, the invention defined by the present claims is not obvious in view of Komatsu et al. in combination with Meyer et al. and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and request that all claims be allowed. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned should she believe that this would expedite prosecution of this application. It is believed that no fee is required. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2165.

Respectfully submitted,

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Diane Dunn McKay, Esq.
Reg. No. 34,586
Attorney for Applicant

MATHEWS, SHEPHERD, McKAY & BRUNEAU, P.A.
29 Thanet Road, Suite 201
Princeton, NJ 08540
Tel: 609 924 8555
Fax: 609 924 3036